

SUBJECT:	Requiring a study on the protection of water facilities from catastrophes
COMMITTEE:	Natural Resources — committee substitute recommended
VOTE:	11 ayes — T. King, E. Thompson, Gamez, Kacal, Kitzman, Lalani, Metcalf, Price, Ramos, Rogers, Zwiener  0 nays
WITNESSES:	For — Adrian Shelley, Public Citizen ( <i>Registered, but did not testify</i> : Bill Kelly, Mayor’s Office, City of Houston; Jennifer Walker, National Wildlife Federation; Shea Pearson, Texas Chemical Council; Jennifer Allmon, The Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops; Kenneth Flippin, US Green Building Council Texas Chapter; and 10 individuals)  Against — None  On — ( <i>Registered, but did not testify</i> : Tammy Benter, Celia Eaves, Public Utility Commission; Michele Risko, TCEQ)
BACKGROUND:	Concerns have been raised over potential disruptions to water services resulting from weather-related catastrophes.
DIGEST:	CSHB 585 would require the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to conduct a study of the potential methods for protecting public drinking water supply systems and wastewater treatment facilities from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• electrical outages;</li><li>• catastrophic weather events;</li><li>• conduct that constituted an offense against critical infrastructure facilities;</li><li>• the projected effects of climate change; and</li><li>• other potential disruptions to providing water service.</li></ul>

TCEQ would be required to consult other state agencies or interested persons as necessary to facilitate the study.

By September 1, 2024, TCEQ would have to create and submit to the governor and the Legislature a report on the results of the study that included recommendations for legislative or other actions to facilitate the protection of the relevant facilities.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2023.